



WATER RESOURCES RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSAL

Project ID: 2005DC72B

Title: An Economic Impact Analysis of DC Drinking Water Quality

Project Type: Research

Focus Categories: Economics, Management and Planning, Water Quality

Keywords: safe drinking water, water quality, lead leaching, economic impact analysis

Start Date: 06/01/2005

End Date: 02/28/2006

Federal Funds: \$15,000

Non-Federal Matching Funds: \$0

Congressional District: District of Columbia

Principal Investigator:
Sharron Terrell

Abstract

In January 2004, District of Columbia Residents learned the drinking water supplied by the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) was contaminated with lead (Swartz 2004 and Cohn 2005). The DC government immediately responded by forming the Interagency Task Force on Lead in Drinking Water (The Task Force) to investigate the problem and propose corrective action (Press Release, April 22, 2004). As a short-term solution to the lead leaching problem, The Task Force distributed water filters and test kits to some DC residents (Press Release, April 22, 2004) and informed households by mail and other media how to purify drinking water and water used for sanitation purposes (Williams and Swartz, C., April 22, 2004). Congress responded to the DC lead leaching problem by establishing the Lead-Free Drinking Water Act of 2004 (The ACT). The Act revised regulations regarding the acceptable level of lead in drinking water as well as legally established DC residents' rights to "a safe, lead free supply of drinking water," (Lead-Free Drinking Water Act of 2004). In testimony presented to the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Government Reform, Paul Swartz testified about negative health consequences to DC residents exposed to lead contaminated drinking water (Swartz, P., 2004). This study will assess household and commercial economic impacts implicit in the discussion of DC's drinking water problem.